

COUNTRY Germany (GDR)  
TOPIC Ammunition Depot at Toepchin

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EVALUATION  PLACE OBTAINED

DATE OF CONTENT

DATE OBTAINED  DATE PREPARED 27 August 1951

REFERENCES

PAGES 5 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

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1. Ammunition shipments which arrived at Ammunition Depot  at Toepchin included 15 boxcars from Rathenow on 13 April 1951, and 2 boxcars from an undetermined dispatcher on 21 April (1)
2. Ammunition shipments which were dispatched by the ammunition depot at Toepchin between 13 April and 21 May included:

<u>Number of boxcars</u>	<u>Destination</u>	<u>Date and Time</u>
16	Altengrabow	7.45 p.m. 12 April
12	Altengrabow	7.45 p.m. 12 April
21	Altenhain	6.10 p.m. 14 April
7	Altenhain	6.10 p.m. 14 April
11	Dannenwalde	6.20 p.m. 19 April
19	Dannenwalde	6.20 p.m. 19 April
1	Strausberg	6.20 p.m. 19 April
11	Sachsenhausen	5.50 p.m. 24 April
3	Finow	5.50 p.m. 24 April
15	Koederau	6.10 p.m. 26 April
3	Jueterbog-Altes- Lager	6 p.m. 28 April
4	Potsdam	5.10 p.m. 12 May
3	Frankfurt/Oder	4.30 p.m. 14 May
2	Koederau	7.20 p.m. 18 May

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2		Dannenwalde	1.20 p.m. 18 May	
4		Altengrabow	6.15 p.m. 21 May	

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3. On 16 April 1951, 2 officers and about 50 soldiers arrived at the ammunition depot from Wuensdorf. The personnel of the installation at that time totaled 15 officers, about 200 EM and 80 to 100 German workers, including 30 women. Since mid-April, loading and unloading of all shipments has been done only by soldiers.

4. The soldiers, who had arrived on 16 April and had been assigned to loading work, left toward Koenigswusterhausen by train on 30 April.

5. Two more officers and 20 EM arrived at the ammunition depot on 18 May. They were seen digging trenches outside the installation. Two trucks left the ammunition depot daily to pick up soldiers in Wuensdorf after about 10 May. The soldiers were said to be guard personnel.

6. On 1 June, 16 German workers, who had previously commuted to the depot by truck, were told that because of a lack of fuel the truck would not run any longer and that they should resign. No replacements were hired.

7. In early June, five more officers were transferred to the ammunition depot and employed at the headquarters. (5)

8. Work at the depot between 9 April and 2 June included:

9 to 21 April. Cleaning of mortar shell fuses in Work Shed No 1. A daily output of 1,600 fuses for eight female workers was set. A shell had a size of 120-mm, a length of 41 cm and a maximum diameter of 36 cm. Packing slips were in each box.

Crating of shells and cartridges by 15 female workers in Work Shed No 2. Each box contained one shell and one cartridge.

23 to 27 April. Cleaning of mortar shells of about 120-mm in Work Shed No 1. Packing slips were in each ammunition box. Crating of shells and cartridges in Work Shed No 2. A brass cartridge weighed 11.25 kg, and the weight of one box containing one shell and one cartridge was 75 kg.

28 and 29 April. Cleaning of mortar shell fuses, with a daily output of 1,000 fuses for 8 female workers in Work Shed No 1. Crating of shells and cartridges in Work Shed No 2.

4 to 18 May. Cleaning and crating of 120-mm mortar shells in Work Shed No 1 with a daily output of 90 boxes containing two shells each per worker. A box weighed 48 kg. Packing slips were in each ammunition box. The process of work was as follows: The shell was put in the cleaning drum, which was filled with brine, then dried with wood shavings and passed to another worker who held it against electrically driven brushes in order to clean its fins and fin holes. Afterwards, the fuse was cleaned with solvent. A female worker screwed the fuse on the shell in another room, and returned it to the cleaning drum where it was washed again in brine and then polished with solvent. Then the shell was stamped, coated with paraffin, crated and loaded for shipment.

7 to 12 May. Crating of shells and cartridges in Work Shed No 2.

14 to 19 May. Loading of heavy artillery ammunition of about 120 mm, which had a length of about 1 meter, in Work Shed No 2.

21 May to 2 June. Cleaning and crating of mortar shells in Work Shed No 1.

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Crating of shells and cartridges in Work Shed No 2. After 30 May, the workers of Work Shed No 2 were employed in policing the depot area.

9. The kind of ammunition loaded could not be identified, since the loading was done by Soviet soldiers only. Eight empty railroad cars arrived at the ammunition depot on 10 April, 7 on 13 April, 10 on 18 April, 3 on 15 May, and 3 on 17 May. On 7 May vehicular traffic was rather light.

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10. Construction work in the depot area included fixing of additional electric lamps near the ground on the lamp posts along the fence between 4 and 18 May; the completion of a stone barracks building, allegedly to be occupied by 50 officers, in late May; and the erection of 2 or 3 telephone poles by 10 employees of a German telephone firm who started working in the installation about 25 May. (5)

11. In mid-April 1951, it was observed that there had been a ban on alcoholic beverages to soldiers [redacted] commanded by Major Tsakhasenko (fnu) for some time. (7). The ban was extended to include officers on 20 April.

12. On 20 April, 4 officers and 38 RM arrived from Wuenstorf and were assigned to the work sheds. German employees have not loaded the ammunition trains since.

13. The eight Germans who were employed by Unit Kariunovka were discharged on 20 April.

14. The Soviet labor detail of about 50 to 60 soldiers who had arrived on 2 April left on 30 April, allegedly for Luckenwalde.

15. In mid-May it was learned that all German workers still handling ammunition were to be discharged in a short time.

16. On 1 June, fifteen soldiers wearing black-bordered red epaulets arrived in the installation. Their employment could not be determined. At the same time, it was learned that all German workers, with the exception of some craftsmen, were to be discharged by the end of July at the latest.

17. Between 4 and 9 June, 15 to 20 German workers, who previously commuted by a truck, were discharged, thus decreasing the number of German personnel to about 33.

18. In the morning of 21 April, 12 unidentified officers inspected the installation, but a committee of 12 persons which arrived from Potsdam on 15 May, inspected only the mortar ammunition.

19. Work at the depot between 21 April and 5 May included:

21 to 28 April 120-mm mortar ammunition from Work Shed No 2 was cleaned in Work Shed No 3 and picked up in front of Work Shed No 3.

30 April to 5 May. Handling of mortar ammunition in Work Shed No 3.

20. On 15 May 1951, German workers and Soviet soldiers started checking all mortar ammunition which was stored in the installation. The fuses were examined, the layer of wax removed from the shells which were then lightly greased.

21. Work was stopped in the work sheds on 27 May. German workers were subsequently employed only in the woods around the ammunition depot.

22. Ammunition stored at the installation between 21 and 28 April 1951, included: 1,005 boxes, each of 12 x 60 cm, and containing 2 mortar shells, and 8 boxes with fuses in Work Shed No 4; 516 boxes, each of 9 x 40 cm and containing 2 mortar shells, in Work Shed No 5; 3,360 boxes, each containing

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2 shells which had a length of 40 cm and a diameter of 16 cm, and 2 cartridges which were 100 cm long, with a box weighing 82 kg, and 13 wooden crates of 25 x 120 cm with artillery shells, and a crate weighing 100 kg, in Packing Shed No 4.

23. Additional ammunition observed between 16 and 30 May included: 1,540 brass cartridges which had a length of 60 cm and a diameter of 30 mm in Packing Shed No 5; 720 to 730 wooden crates with 21-mm shells in underground bunker C 23; and 80-mm mortar ammunition, each shell 29 cm long, in the bunkers B-2, B-4, B-6 and B-8. (8)

24. Shipments of unknown cargo which were dispatched by the ammunition depot at Toepchin between 12 and 29 April 1951 included:

Shipment	Destination	Date and Time
22 cars	Unknown;	12 April
25 Cars	Altenhain, Justerbog and Bitterfeld	14 April, 6 p.m.
25 cars, including 1 car loaded from Packing Shed No 4	Darstberg/Tecklenburg via Koenigs-wusterhausen and Oranienburg	19 April
14 cars	Falkenrehde via Koenigswusterhausen and Schoeneweide;	24 April, 2 p.m.
13 cars; dispatched by Unit Marinkova	Unknown	26 April 3 p.m.
7 cars; dispatched by Unit Marinkova	Unknown	28 April, 3 p.m.
8 cars; dispatched by Unit Tsakhashenko	Justerbog	29 April (9)

25. The former billets for ordnance personnel were pulled down between 12 and 28 April to obtain bricks for the rebuilding of Packing Shed No 7. Bricks from the billets were also used for the enlargement of the work shop. (8)
26. On 20 May, two construction firms arrived in the sector of the Unit Tsakhashenko and were ordered to convert some houses into BM quarters. The fitting shop had already been moved into the building where cartridges were cleaned. Furthermore, it was planned to convert all kitchens in the officers' houses into officers' quarters.
27. On 31 May, an improvised quarters was set up in Packing Shed No 7. Fifty beds were put up for 50 officers expected to arrive on 2 June.
28. All overground telephone wires in the ammunition depot were pulled down and replaced by underground cables after 30 May.
29. In early June, the German construction firms converted an empty three-story house into an BM quarters.
30. On 30 May, Unit Tsakhashenko received 5 [redacted] Ford trucks and 1 Opel sedan. Three of the trucks were parked in a garage and three trucks and the sedan in the stable. The sedan belonged to Major Tsakhashenko (Arm). [redacted] A second fire truck was assigned to the ammunition depot on 1 June.
31. On 1 June, 15 riding horses, allegedly of best breed, arrived at the ammunition depot and were kept in a fenced pasture in the woods outside the installation.

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32. Since the beginning of May, nearly all officers and EM of the ammunition depot left the installation for field exercises several times a week. They allegedly practiced the defense of the Toepchin ammunition depot.
33. On 8 May, a Soviet AAA unit was emplaced in the woods about 500 meters south of Sputenberg, off the Toepchin-Egsdorf highway. It was an additional AAA unit, since the unit which has been observed since 28 February 1951 in an emplacement on the former area of the brickyard, about 200 meters northwest of the ammunition depot, was still there. The soldiers of the new unit, which allegedly was to protect the installation, were observed digging entrenchments in the woods. There were some officers and about 50 EM who were quartered in a wooden barracks near the gun emplacement. (10)

Comments.

- (1) The shipment on 13 April was [redacted] dispatched from Rathenow [redacted]
- (3) The same shipment was also observed en route to Altenhain on 15 April 1951. [redacted]
- (5) The report contains supplementary information on the large Soviet ammunition depot at Toepchin. [redacted]
- (7) Major Tsakhashenko, (fmu), is reported for the first time.
- (8) The building numbers are keyed to sketches attached to previous report.
- (9) Some of the shipments are probably identical with the ammunition shipments in paragraph 2 of the present report.
- (10) The AAA unit which was emplaced on 28 February 1951. [redacted]

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